

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Initially, Applicant would like to express appreciation to the Examiner for the detailed Official Action provided, for the acknowledgment of Applicant's Information Disclosure Statement by return of the Form PTO-1449, and for the acknowledgment of Applicant's Claim for Priority and receipt of the certified copy of the priority document in the Official Action. However, Applicant notes that the Examiner has not acknowledged that the drawings are acceptable, and it is requested that the Examiner indicate the same in the next Official Action.

Upon entry of the above amendments claims 1, 4, 7-12, 14, 18, 22 and 27 will have been amended; claims 3 and 6 will have been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter thereof; and claims 33 and 34 will have been added. Claims 1, 2, 4, 5 and 7-34 are currently pending. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the outstanding objection and rejections, and allowance of all the claims pending in the present application.

In the Official Action, the Examiner rejected claims 7, 9 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. In particular, the Examiner asserts that there is no antecedent basis for deep blades in claim 7, and that the recitation of the "thickness direction ...groves" in claims 9 and 12, is unclear. Without acquiescing to the propriety of the above-noted rejection, claim 7 has been amended to provided proper antecedent basis for the recitation of deep blades. Further, in regard to claims 9 and 12, the claims have been amended to clarify that holes are provided in the bottom of the folding rules, and are formed

between adjacent grooves (4a, as illustrated by way of the non-limiting example of Fig. 25). Accordingly, the rejection is improper, and should be withdrawn.

In the Official Action, the Examiner has rejected claims 1, 2 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by EIJI et al. (Japanese Pub. No. JP 2001-293777);

Claims 4-6, 14-21, and 32 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by KUNITSUGU (Japanese Pub. No. JP 2001-062909); and

Claims 8-13 and 22-31 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by KAWATA et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,666,808).

With respect to the rejection of claims 1, 2 and 7 noted above, although Applicants do not necessarily agree with the Examiner's rejection of the claims on these grounds, nevertheless, Applicants have amended independent claim 1 to clearly obviate the above-noted grounds of rejection in order to expedite prosecution of the present application. In this regard, Applicants note that EIJI fails to teach or suggest the combination of elements as recited in amended claim 1. In particular, claim 1, as amended, sets forth a plastic sheet including, inter alia, concave folding rules including a pair of side faces inclined at a specified angle and mutually facing oppositely; shallow grooves; a plurality of deeper grooves; and grooves of medium depth, which are deeper than the shallow grooves and shallower than the deep grooves, are formed in the bottom between the shallow groove.

Applicants submit that EIJI lacks any disclosure of the above-mentioned combination of elements.

In this regard, the Examiner cites to EIJI Figs. 1-7 as purportedly disclosing the plastic sheet comprising folding rules as disclosed in the present disclosure. In particular, the Examiner asserts that elements 3 and 4, as disclosed in EIJI, constitute deep grooves and shallow grooves, respectively (see Pages 2 and 3, reference numeral 4 of the Official Action). However, contrary to the present disclosure, the most EIJI discloses is grooves of two different depths (see Fig. 4, E). Thus, EIJI does not disclose grooves of medium depth, which are deeper than the shallow grooves and shallower than the deep grooves, formed in the bottom between the shallow grooves, as required by amended claim 1. Further, the Examiner acknowledges that EIJI does not teach grooves of medium depth (see Page 7, reference numeral 9 of the Official Action). Accordingly, the rejection of claims 1, 2 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) is improper and should be withdrawn.

In regard to the rejection of claims 4-6, 14-21, and 32, although Applicants do not necessarily agree with the Examiner's rejection of the claims on these grounds, nevertheless, Applicants have amended independent claim 4 to clearly obviate the above-noted grounds of rejection in order to expedite prosecution of the present application. In this regard, Applicants note that KUNITSUGU fails to teach or suggest the combination of elements as recited in amended claim 4. In particular, claim 4, as amended, sets forth a rule cutter for plastic sheet including, inter alia, blades of medium infeed, which are deeper than the infeed of the shallow grooves and shallower than the infeed of the deep grooves, formed between adjacent shallow blades.

In this regard, the Examiner cites to KUNITSUGU Fig 6 as purportedly disclosing the rule cutter of the present disclosure. In particular, the Examiner asserts that elements 14 and 16, as disclosed in KUNITSUGU, constitute blades of shallow and deep infeed, respectively (see Pages 3, reference numeral 5 of the Official Action). However, contrary to the present disclosure, the edge 14 is a straight edge and does not have an infeed at all (see FIG. 6). Additionally, Figs. 6 and 7 clearly show that the center blade, 16, at most, has the same infeed in comparison to adjacent blades. Thus, KUNITSUGU does not disclose blades of medium infeed, which are deeper than the infeed of the shallow grooves and shallower than the infeed of the deep grooves, formed between adjacent shallow blades, as required by amended claim 4. Accordingly, the rejection of claims 4, 5 and 32 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) is improper and should be withdrawn.

Applicants further submit that independent claim 18, as amended, is similar to independent claim 4 in that it recites a rule cutter including, inter alia, blades of medium height, which are taller than the height of the shallow blades and shorter than the height of the deep grooves, are formed between adjacent shallow blades. Accordingly, the rejection of claims 18-21 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) is improper for reasons similar to claim 4, and withdrawal thereof is respectfully requested.

Applicants further note that KUNITSUGU fails to teach or suggest the combination of elements as recited in amended claim 14. In particular, claim 14, as amended, sets forth a plastic sheet with concave folding rules including, inter alia, grooves of medium depth, which are deeper than the shallow grooves and

shallower than the deep grooves, are formed along the bottom of the folding rules between adjacent shallow grooves.

Applicants submit that KUNITSUGU lacks any disclosure of the above-mentioned combination of elements.

In this regard, the Examiner cites to Figs. 6 and 7 as purportedly disclosing the plastic rule of the present disclosure. Initially, Applicants note that Figs. 6 and 7 actually correspond to the rule cutter for a plastic sheet. Further, Fig. 5 appears to disclose the plastic rule formed by the rule cutter of Fig. 6. Additionally, as illustrated in Fig. 5 of KUNITSUGU, the grooves formed by respective blades (as shown in Fig. 6) appear to have the same depth. Thus, KUNITSUGU does not disclose forming grooves of medium depth, which are deeper than the shallow grooves and shallower than the deep grooves, along the bottom of the folding rules between adjacent shallow grooves. Accordingly, the rejection of claims 14-17 is improper, and should be withdrawn.

In regard to claims 8-13 and 22-31 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as noted above, although Applicants do not necessarily agree with the Examiner's rejection of the claims on these grounds, nevertheless, Applicants have amended independent claim 8 to clearly obviate the above-noted grounds of rejection in order to expedite prosecution of the present application. In this regard, Applicants note that KAWATA (U.S. Patent No. 6,666,808) fails to teach or suggest the combination of elements as recited in amended claim 8. In particular, claim 8, as amended, sets forth a plastic sheet provided with concave folding rules including, inter alia, a plurality of grooves formed shallower than the

folding rules in the overall length of bottom of folding rules, and the grooves inclined at a specified angle to the rule forming direction of folding rules to arrange in a rope pattern, wherein inclined side surfaces of adjacent grooves contact each other along respective inclined side surfaces

Applicants submit that KAWATA lacks any disclosure of the above-mentioned combination of elements.

The Examiner cites to FIG. 9 of KAWATA as purportedly disclosing the plastic sheet of the present disclosure. In particular, the Examiner asserts that the grooves, positioned at an angle θ with respect to one another, form a rope pattern. However, contrary to the present disclosure, the side surfaces (18) of the grooves are spaced by a distance L2 from one another (see Fig. 9). Thus, KAWATA does not disclose inclined side surfaces of adjacent grooves contacting each other, as required by amended claim 8. Accordingly, the rejection of claims 8-10 is improper, and should be withdrawn.

Applicants further note that KAWATA fails to teach or suggest the combination of elements as recited in amended claim 11. In particular, claim 11, as amended, sets forth a rule cutter for a plastic sheet including, inter alia, a plurality of concave blades are formed in the overall length of top of rule cutter, and the blades are inclined at a specified angle to the rule forming direction of folding rules to arrange the blades in a rope pattern, wherein inclined side surfaces of adjacent blades contact each other.

Applicants submit that KAWATA lacks any disclosure of the above-mentioned combination of elements.

In this regard, the Examiner cites that KAWATA discloses a rule cutter as claimed in claims 11-13 without further explanation (see Page 5 of the Official Action). However, contrary to the present disclosure, the grooves illustrated in Fig. 9 and formed by a corresponding cutter would be formed by blades having spaced adjacent side surfaces (see Fig. 9) Thus, KAWATA does not disclose a plurality of concave blades formed in the overall length of top of rule cutter, and the blades inclined at a specified angle to the rule forming direction of folding rules to arrange the blades in a rope pattern, wherein inclined side surfaces of adjacent blades contact each other. Accordingly, the rejection of claims 11-13 is improper, and should be withdrawn.

Applicants further note that KAWATA fails to teach or suggest the combination of elements as recited in amended claim 22. In particular, claim 22, as amended, sets forth a plastic sheet including, inter alia, a plurality of shallow grooves that are shallower than the folding rules and deep grooves that are deeper than shallow grooves, are formed in the longitudinal direction along the bottom of the folding rules, and a plurality protrusions that are smaller than the shallow and deep grooves are formed in the longitudinal direction along the top of the grooves.

Applicants submit that KAWATA lacks any disclosure of the above-mentioned combination of elements.

In this regard, the Examiner cites to KAWATA, Figs. 8A and 3A, as purportedly disclosing the plastic sheet of the present disclosure. In particular, the Examiner asserts that the element indicated by reference numeral 14 is a

plurality of protrusions. However, contrary to the Examiner's assertion, Col. 5, lines 33-35 of KAWATA, clearly indicate that reference numeral 14 indicates recesses having the shape of a parallelogram. Further, all of the recesses indicated by reference numeral 14 of KAWATA, appear to have a uniform shape (see FIG. 3B). Additionally, KAWATA does not disclose, and the Examiner has not indicated, any feature that can be reasonably interpreted as a protrusion that is smaller than the shallow and deep grooves. Thus, KAWATA does not disclose a plurality of shallow grooves that are shallower than the folding rules and deep grooves that are deeper than shallow grooves, formed in the longitudinal direction along the bottom of the folding rules, and a plurality protrusions that are smaller than the shallow and deep grooves formed in the longitudinal direction along the top of the grooves, as required by amended claim 22. Accordingly, the rejection of claims 22-26 under 25 U.S.C. § 102(b) is improper, and should be withdrawn.

Applicants further note that KAWATA fails to teach or suggest the combination of elements as recited in amended claim 27. In particular, claim 27, as amended, sets forth a rule cutter for plastic sheet including, inter alia, a plurality of shallow blades that are shallower than the folding rules and deep blades that are deeper than the shallow blades, formed in the longitudinal direction along the top of the rule cutter, and a plurality recesses smaller than the shallow and deep blades formed in the longitudinal direction along the bottom of the blades.

Applicants submit that KAWATA lacks any disclosure of the above-mentioned combination of elements.

The Examiner cites to Figs. 2A-2C of KAWATA as purportedly disclosing the rule cutter of the present disclosure. In particular, the Examiner appear to take the position that element 26 indicates a plurality of recesses smaller than the shallow and deep blades in a longitudinal direction along the bottom of the blades. However, contrary to the Examiner assertions, the recesses 26 appear to be at least the same depth as the blades. In this regard, the recesses 26 correspond to remnants 16 which border the recesses 14 (see FIG. 3c). Thus. KAWATA does not disclose a plurality of shallow blades that are shallower than the folding rules and deep blades that are deeper than the shallow blades, formed in the longitudinal direction along the top of the rule cutter, and a plurality recesses smaller than the shallow and deep blades formed in the longitudinal direction along the bottom of the blades. Accordingly, the rejection of claims 27-31 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) is improper, and should be withdrawn.

Absent a disclosure in a single reference of each and every element recited in a claim, a *prima facie* case of anticipation cannot be made under 35 U.S.C. § 102. Since the applied references fail to disclose each and every element recited in independent claims 1, 4, 8, 11, 14, 18, 22 and 27 as well as claims 2, 5, 7, 9-10, 12, 13, 15-17, 19-21, 23-26 and 28-32 dependent therefrom, these claims are not anticipated thereby. Further, all pending dependent claims recite additional features that further define the present invention over the prior art. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the

rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102 and allow all pending claims in the present application.

In the Official Action, the Examiner has rejected claim 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over EIJI in view of TADASHI (Japanese Pub. No. 8-039661).

Applicant respectfully traverses the above noted rejections of claim 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Although the Examiner acknowledges that EIJI does not disclose grooves of medium depth, the Examiner relies on the purported teaching of TADASHI as purportedly supplying deficiencies of EIJI. In this regard, the Examiner cites to element 43 of TADASHI as purportedly disclosing grooves of medium depth. However, contrary to the Examiner's assertions, the element indicated by reference numeral H53, as illustrated in Fig. 4, appears to be a longitudinal cross section as indicated by line II--II. Therefore, what is indicated in Fig. 4 is actually the varying height of individual grooves at a particular point along the cross section of the groove. Thus, TADASHI does not disclose grooves of medium height, as required by amended claim 1. Therefore, even assuming, arguendo, that the teachings of EIJI and TADASHI have been properly combined, the proposed combination still would not have resulted in the features of the embodiments of the present disclosure, as recited in amended claim 1 which recites features similar to previously pending, now canceled, claim 3.

In view of the remarks/arguments herein, Applicants submit that independent claims 1, 4, 8, 11, 14, 18, 22 and 27 are in condition for allowance.

With regard to dependent claims 2, 5, 7, 9-10, 12, 13, 15-17, 19-21, 23-26 and 28-32, Applicants assert that they are allowable on their own merit, as well as because they depend from respective independent claims, which Applicants have shown to be allowable.

In regard to new dependent claims 33 and 34, which recite additional features of embodiments of the present disclosure, Applicants assert that they are allowable on their own merit, as well as because they depend from respective independent claims 1 and 4, which Applicants have shown to be allowable.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims in the present application are clearly patentable over the references cited by the Examiner, either alone or in combination, and an indication to such effect is respectfully requested, in due course.

SUMMARY

Applicants submit that the present application is in condition for allowance, and respectfully request an indication to that effect. Applicants have argued the allowability of the claims and pointed out deficiencies of the applied reference. Accordingly, reconsideration of the outstanding Official Action and allowance of the present application and all the claims therein are respectfully requested and is now believed to be appropriate.

Any amendments to the claims which have been made in this amendment, and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Should the Examiner have any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,
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June 16, 2006
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